

The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

15 March 1985

Mr. Leo Cherne, Executive Director
The Research Institute of America, Inc.
589 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Leo,

I returned home from Europe last evening, and found your letter of March 5th. It's very kind of you to acknowledge my participation in the estimate on African famine. As a long-time admirer of you and the International Rescue Committee, it was a pleasure to be of some direct help.

Our cooperation on this project suggests that there is much we can do to make intelligence more available to key private sector organizations. This is something we might discuss the next time you're in Washington and have time for a meal or a drink.

Again, my thanks for your kind words.

Sincerely yours,



Herbert E. Meyer

Approved For Release 2010/02/19 : CIA-RDP87-00462R000100120030-0

3/13/85

Herb,

Would you like to send a copy of
attached to C/NIC?

- B.

A handwritten signature, possibly "B.", is enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

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Leo Cherne



*Executive Director
The Research Institute of America, Inc.
589 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017*

March 5, 1985

Mr. Herbert Meyer, Vice Chairman
National Intelligence Council
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Herb:

Three months have passed since you thoughtfully sent me the estimate on African famine. I have referred to that document repeatedly as more and more information has become available in the public prints (and some misinformation).

The International Rescue Committee's field offices in the Sudan has kept me alert with whatever information and judgement is available to them from their limited perspective. In addition, of course, the various cables have added further detail.

All of this and more has served to increase my admiration and debt for the acuity of the judgements which were conveyed in the estimate.

I am enclosing a letter and brief memo I sent to Vice President Bush in preparation for his trip, especially since he will be visiting an area which the IRC has been functioning in for four years and is extending its capability as rapidly as is humanly possible during recent months. Ours is now the largest, and I feel certain, the most effective emergency response along the Sudan border, and I thought you might wish to know some of the detail.

I cannot close without expressing personal appreciation to you for your own effort, without which I feel certain that this estimate would not have been at the very high quality it is.

Warm personal regards.

Sincerely,

Leo Cherne

LC/cl
encl

RESCUE COMMITTEE, INC.

386 PARK AVENUE SOUTH • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016 • TEL (212) 679-0010

IRC

FOUNDED 1933

February 21, 1985

The Honorable George Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I know that your trip to Africa has been delayed, and I hope the enclosed brief report reaches you before your departure.

Inadequate attention has been paid to the fact that starving Ethiopian refugees have for some time been fleeing to the Sudan. Your visit will significantly alter that misperception. If your itinerary includes a visit to the FAO camp near Gedaref or to Wad Kouli, a meeting with American relief workers in the field would be useful from an American point of view.

Some private voluntary organizations have been providing assistance to these tragic people for some time. The International Rescue Committee is prominent in this effort, and has in fact been operating on that border for four years.

There is also a mistaken assumption, which the Ethiopian government has sought to foster, that the United States' response to the plight of starving Ethiopians was reluctant and late. The IRC has been at this tragic task for four years and is a respected U.S. agency. We have been encouraged in our work from the very first by the State Department, the UNHCR, and the government of Sudan and, in fact, we have been increasing our personnel and medical response dramatically and rapidly during this last year as the numbers of those making the long trek to Sudan have increased.

The report I am enclosing has been prepared for our directors and may contain some facts which are of value to you in the course of your very important mission.

Godspeed - and warm wishes.

Sincerely,

Leo Cherne

LC/cl
encl

bc: John W., Carel, Al, Bob
Jack Cherne

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EMERGENCY PROGRAM FOR ETHIOPIAN FAMINE VICTIMS IN THE SUDAN

Victims of the famine inside Ethiopia have been fleeing in rising numbers to the Sudan, where International Rescue Committee medical, relief and health care teams have been stationed since 1980. The Washington Post reported from Khartoum on January 25: "More than 3,000 Ethiopians are pouring into the Sudan daily, overwhelming facilities that already hold more than a half million refugees from famine and drought. It is estimated that 127,000 refugees have arrived from Ethiopia since the flow accelerated in October and that as many as 600,000 will have arrived by the end of March." The New York Times reported that "the majority of those flocking into the Sudan are children, whose pencil-thin bodies, clothed in little more than rags, transmit tales of suffering and tragedy."

Last November, responding to the massive Ethiopian refugee crisis, IRC quickly expanded its existing staffs and facilities in the Sudan as follows:

1. In November and December 1984, IRC recruited and sent to Sudan 21 staff workers and volunteers: 11 American nurses, 4 doctors, 2 nutritional feeding experts, a sanitarian, a laboratory technician and 2 emergency program administrators. Among the nurses are public health specialists and pediatric nurse/practitioners. By the end of January 1985, their number rose to 35, and will reach 50 by March.

2. Three refugee "reception" centers have been established near the border, in addition to the six Sudanese refugee camps where IRC facilities are located (Tawawa, Tenedba, Abu Rakham, Wad Awad, Mafaza and El Hawata). Each of the centers has an IRC team, the medical component of which has at least one doctor and two nurses. The centers, referred to as FAO I, FAO II and FAO III, are receiving the refugees from the border sites where IRC has also sent medical staffs. The plight of sick, starving and dying refugees - who walk for weeks to reach Sudan - is beyond imagination.

3. IRC has established clinics for the refugees, as well as separate facilities for pregnant and lactating mothers and their children under five-years old. In addition, supplemental feeding programs for starving children have been opened. An immunization program has been started. Sanitarians ensure the adequacy and fitness of water supplies, and work with other IRC public health personnel in developing measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

4. A staff of 70 Ethiopian refugees, trained in recent years by IRC, has been augmented by an additional 100 refugee aides who serve with the medical, public health and feeding teams. IRC nurse-practitioners train and work with the refugees, many of whom have had medical experience inside Ethiopia prior to their flight. Among their responsibilities is the expansion of outreach programs. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has stated:

"IRC's Ethiopian refugee staff is a unique feature of the Sudan program. IRC enables them to serve their own countrymen, thus following the philosophy of helping refugees to help themselves."

The cost of IRC's Ethiopian emergency program inside Sudan for the three-month period starting December 1984 will reach \$300,000. For the following three-month period (March, April, May 1985) the cost will escalate as more refugees arrive, facilities are expanded and additional personnel are recruited. The IRC staff is in control of its medical, sanitation and nutritional feeding services in Sudan; the work is administered directly by IRC. For many years, IRC's combined administrative and fund raising costs have ranged from only 4% to 8% of total expenditures.

The refugees pouring into the Sudan are from the northern provinces of Ethiopia where the famine is most severe-- yet where the delivery of supplies is hampered by the Addis Ababa government, which is engaged in a civil war against Eritrean and Tigrayan independence movements. Many refugees report that they have been strafed during their flight to Sudan by Ethiopian government planes.

AK: 1/31/85